

## CELEBRATION OF THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KANSAS CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY'S WESTPORT BRANCH

**HON. EMANUEL CLEAVER**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 24, 2023*

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Kansas City Public Library's Westport Branch for its one hundred twenty-fifth anniversary of service. For more than a century, the Westport Library has nurtured Missouri's Fifth Congressional District with public services and resources that help keep our community afloat. As Kansas City's first library branch to have opened, the Westport Library paved the way for the current library system in Kansas City to exist.

The Westport Library first opened its doors to the community on February 22, 1898, under the name Allen Library in honor of Arthur M. Allen, who made its inception possible. After having discovered a surplus of \$7,500 in taxes collected for the construction of a horse railroad line between Westport and Kansas City, Allen decided to go against the city in court to secure the funds and establish a community library.

Allen won the court case and began the process to open the library. With the money won, the land to build the library was pur-

chased for \$1,800 and the library built for \$5,012. To ensure that there would be books for the newly built library, Allen, who was a member of the Westport School Board, helped allocate a total budget of \$2000 so that the library could be stocked for its visitors. The library opened to the Westport community with Margurite Smith as its first librarian providing local residents with knowledge, resources, and a place for exchanging ideas. Then, when Kansas City annexed Westport, the Allen Library became the first branch of the Kansas City Public Library system, continuing to bear Allen's name on its outside walls. Without the establishment of the Westport Library, generations upon generations would not have had the access to books and the opportunity to nurture their intellectual curiosity.

Throughout its one hundredth and twenty-fifth years of existence, the Westport Library has stood as a landmark in Kansas City's Midtown community. This historic building serves as a meeting place for students and residents looking for resources such as free Wi-Fi, help obtaining a passport, historic archives, and books to read. Now more than ever, the public service that the Westport library has provided for the residents of Kansas City must be applauded.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me in congratulating the current and former staff members of this establishment who have worked tirelessly to connect people with ideas, services, and resources that make our community a better place. The Westport Library set the

stage for the creation of the Kansas City Public Library system that exists today and that continues to bridge the gap between useful information and our neighbors. The Westport Library's contribution to Kansas City's population cannot be overstated, and I have no doubt that they will continue this important work over the next century and beyond.

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**HONORING THE MEMORY OF  
CHRISTOPHER SHAWN KING****HON. MARCUS J. MOLINARO**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, February 24, 2023*

Mr. MOLINARO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Christopher Shawn King who passed away on February 2 of this year. Christopher was a devoted father, Air Force veteran, volunteer firefighter and friend to all who he met.

He was a man whose love and care was evident to all who knew him. While he was taken from us far too soon, his family and friends will long cherish their time with him.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues in the House join me in honoring the memory of Christopher Shawn King. While we mourn his passing, we celebrate his life and the legacy he leaves behind. May his life and memory always be a blessing.